

THE OCCURRENCE OF THE PAVEMENT ANT (*TETRAMORIUM CÆSPITUM* L.) IN BOSTON.

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The common European pavement ant (*Tetramorium cæspitum* L.) must have been introduced into the United States during colonial days, if Marlatt is correct in supposing that it is the ant referred to by Kalm in his "Travels" in 1748 as infesting houses in Philadelphia. It has certainly been established for many years in the vicinity of Philadelphia, New York City, in New Jersey, on Long Island and in Maryland (Washington and vicinity). I have often found it in Westchester County, N. Y., nesting under stones and occasionally storing small seeds in the chambers of its nests just as it does in various parts of Europe and North Africa. (See Donisthorpe's "British Ants, 2nd Ed. 1927, p. 195). As this ant is very common and prolific over an enormous area in the Old World, from England to Japan, and is represented by certain subspecies as far south as British East Africa and Cape Colony, it is difficult to understand why its spread in the United States has been so slow. This may be due, perhaps, either to the animosity of our native ants or to the enmity which seems so commonly to exist between any two *cæspitum* colonies as to lead to frequent deadly battles between them.

Apart from a few specimens taken in Springfield, Mass. and sent me by Mr. George Dimmock, I have seen no record of the pavement ant from New England. More than twenty years ago I found it abundant at White Plains and Mamaroneck, N. Y., near the Connecticut boundary. Since that time it may have entered the southern portion of that state and have moved up the valley of the Connecticut River as far as Springfield.

On two successive evenings, those of Jan. 19 and 20, 1927, which were very mild and followed a cold spell, I was surprised to find the heated and electric-lighted vestibule of an apartment building (101 Chestnut St.) in the heart of Boston, alive with ants celebrating their marriage flight. They were soon recognized as males and females of *T. cæspitum*, and had issued from

a crevice in the floor near their nest which was situated in the outer masonry of the building. A number of workers were still running about the crevice from which they had permitted their voluminous sexual forms to escape. The apartment building surrounds a court containing a garden. Probably the ants had lived in the soil of this enclosure till the advent of cold weather and had then migrated into the vestibule. At any rate they were here able to bring their sexual forms to maturity and to stage their nuptial flight at a most unusual season, for the normal marriage flight, according to European observers, occurs in July, or at least sometime between June and September. Since the apartment building is very near the Charles River it will be interesting to determine whether the ants may not be spreading from the parked esplanade which borders the river in that part of the city.